

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request consideration of the subject application as amended herein. This Amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed May 17, 2007. Claims 1-44 stand rejected. In this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 19, 29 and 36 have been amended. Claims 2, 15, 28, 35 and 42 have been canceled. No new matter has been added.

35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner rejected claims 1-44 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being anticipated by Redeker, et al., (U.S. Patent No. 6,869,332, hereinafter "Redeker"), in view of Hewett, et al, (U.S. Patent No. 6,534,328, hereinafter "Hewett"). As discussed below, the pending claims are patentable over the above reference.

The current Office Action states:

Redeker et al. teaches a method for qualifying a semiconductor manufacturing tool, by using a computer readable medium, 90, comprising a single patterned wafer to a bulk removal polishing platen, (col. 7, lines 31-63), measuring in situ bulk removal polishing platen characteristics, which include polishing rate, nonuniformity, and defectivity, from the wafer during processing by the bulk removal polishing platen, using an eddy current sensor implemented at the bulk removal polishing platen, (col. 9, lines 57-59), qualifying the bulk removal polishing platen by adjusting one or more parameters of a recipe in accordance with the one or more bulk removal polishing platen characteristics, (col. 10, lines 46-61).

(Office Action, 05/17/2007, page 2).

Applicants respectfully disagree with Examiner's reading of Redeker. Specifically, Redeker does not teach or suggest monitoring a defectivity, much less in situ monitoring of a defectivity. Examiner is respectfully asked to distinctly point out the passages of Redeker that support such a teaching.

Redeker teaches using an eddy current monitoring system and an optical monitoring

system for process control (e.g., to adjust carrier head pressure and platen rotation rate) and for endpoint detection during chemical mechanical polishing. (Redeker, col. 6, lines 8-16). The eddy current monitoring system and optical monitoring system of Redeker are used in situ to monitor a **metal layer thickness**. (Redeker, col. 9, lines 47-61; col. 10, lines 19-24). However, Redeker does not teach or suggest monitoring, in situ, a **defectivity**. In contrast, claim 3 recites, measuring, in situ, a defectivity from a wafer. Therefore, Redeker does not teach at least the features of the present invention that are included in the following language of claim 3:

... measuring, in situ, from said wafer, during processing by each of the set of platens of said manufacturing tool, one or more qualification characteristics of each of the set of platens, wherein said one or more qualification characteristics include a defectivity ...

Hewitt teaches a method of modeling and controlling the endpoint of chemical mechanical polishing operations performed on a process layer. (Hewitt, col. 3, lines 16-19). However, Hewitt does not teach monitoring a defectivity. Therefore, Hewitt does not teach or suggest the elements of claim 3 that are missing from Redeker.

Neither Redeker nor Hewitt, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all of the limitations of claim 3. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that Examiner remove her rejections to claim 3 and its dependent claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

Claims 19, 29 and 36 include the language, “wherein said one or more qualification characteristics include a defectivity.” As noted above, neither Redeker nor Hewett, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests such a limitation. Accordingly, the applicants respectfully assert that the present invention as claimed in claims 19, 29 and 36, and their corresponding dependent claims, is patentable over the cited references.

Claim 1 includes the language, “measuring, in situ, a defectivity from said wafer.” As noted above, neither Redeker nor Hewett, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests such a

limitation. Accordingly, the applicants respectfully assert that the present invention as claimed in claim 1, is patentable over the cited references.

Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

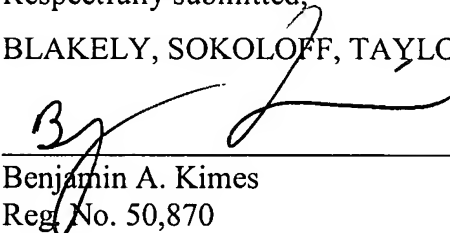
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT AUTHORIZATION

Authorization is hereby given to charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any charges that may be due. Furthermore, if an extension is required, then Applicant hereby requests such extension.

If the Examiner determines the prompt allowance of these claims could be facilitated by a telephone conference, the Examiner is invited to contact Benjamin A. Kimes at (408) 720-8300.

Respectfully submitted,
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